

# DEMOCRACY DIALOGUE

From USAID's Center for Democracy and Governance ♦ Spring 1997



## Government-Private Sector Collaboration in Uganda

*based on a report by  
Dr. William Kalema*

**A**lthough essential to social and political stability, the relationship between government authority and private sector interests are not always constructive. When positive, the relationship yields fruitful results for the society at large and for the business sector. In some cases, however, divergent short-term interests lead to conflict; in extreme circumstances, outright mistrust and rivalry prevail.

USAID's Implementing Policy Change (IPC) project is designed to

strengthen relationships among government, civil society, and the private sector in developing countries. It does so by addressing organizational, financial, political, and technological issues associated with policy implementation. Its purpose is to build trust and communication among diverse constituencies. This methodology has been particularly successful in Uganda, where an IPC-supported process has addressed seemingly irresolvable public and private sector interests.

Beginning in the early 1990s, IPC consultants identified high-level public and private sector stakeholders who

were concerned that the policy climate necessary for vibrant business development in Uganda did not exist. These stakeholders included members of the Presidential Economic Council (PEC) and the Uganda Manufacturers' Association (UMA). With funds and an invitation from the USAID mission in Kampala, IPC consultants helped stakeholders to examine the issues critical to focusing and energizing existing government policies and private sector initiatives related to private investment and export development. The stakeholders' goal was to

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## Center Director Explores Democratic Development in Egypt

*based on an interview with  
Center Director  
Charles E. Costello*

**"M**any of the key factors seem to be in place for the strengthening of a more liberal political and economic framework," noted Charles Costello upon returning from a trip to Egypt in January of this year. Costello, the director of USAID's Center for Democracy and Governance, traveled

to Egypt to review USAID's democracy/governance (DG) programming in that country. He was accompanied by Dr. Gary Hansen, the Center's senior technical advisor for civil society.

According to Costello, Egypt stands poised to make significant moves toward political and economic liberalization. While several decades of Soviet-style central planning have left its economy in poor shape, Egypt has retained a well-developed human resource base and a comparatively well-developed infrastructure. In the past few years, the government has moved forward in implementing a sound macro-economic framework. Prospects for economic growth have improved. Additionally, Egypt is a key leader in preserving Middle East stability.

Within this context, USAID is seeking opportunities for strategic DG involvement. To date, USAID/Cairo has focused on a number of vital DG sector areas, in hopes of acting as a catalyst for change and a resource for innovative ideas and practices.

**Legal Reform** In an atmosphere of growing economic liberalization, USAID has worked with civil courts to create a stable, transparent, and predictable legal system. USAID/Cairo hopes to facilitate commercial transactions and make the country more appealing to domestic and foreign investors. It is also expected that the introduction of case management methodology will generate benefits that extend beyond the civil realm to the legal system as a whole.

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# Center Faces New Democracy/Governance Challenges

*Excerpted from remarks made by Jennifer Windsor, Deputy Director of the Center for Democracy and Governance. Ms. Windsor invites the Center's development partners to share their thoughts on how the Center can improve its efforts to design and implement programs to strengthen global democracy and governance.*

**U**SAID's Center for Democracy and Governance is a relatively new entity—less than three years old. The Center's purpose is to help promote the transition to and consolidation of democratic regimes throughout the world. At this point in the Center's evolution, we need to reflect on where we are, where we want to go, and whether we are on the right track.

There is no "science" to democracy work, however. We at the Center rely heavily on our development partners to help us address the most pressing questions: How do we identify the most appropriate program ideas as we design democracy/governance programs? How can we best respond to the challenges and opportunities that dramatic political change (e.g., the Congo) presents?



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Given the magnitude of challenges, scarcity of resources, and limited time that we have to make an impact, we must be creative and willing to change course if current efforts fail to bear fruit.

We are entering a new era. While we spent the last decade working in transitional countries, we now face situations that are more complex. These include cases of partial transition, where progress has been made, but more must occur. In the case of stalled or reversed transitions, how do we design policy and programs to get countries "back on track"? We grapple with how to address post-conflict states, or "failed states," often with no functional governmental structure and a debilitating legacy of violence.

We are also working to help consolidate democratic gains that have been made around the world. In many countries, the understanding of democratic rights and responsibilities has not necessarily translated into democratic behavior. We continue to face a significant concentration of economic and political power in the executive branch, weak or dysfunctional legislatures, immature political parties, and judicial systems that—while improved—remain inadequate.

**Rule of Law** USAID has the longest history of work in this sector, primarily in Latin America. We need to build on what we have learned and apply relevant lessons to other regions. We are exploring how to support critical areas beyond formal justice work, including strengthening access to justice through legal education, establishing a public defenders' capability, and supporting mechanisms for alternative dispute resolution. In societies which are emerging from a violent past, we struggle with the balance between justice and reconciliation.

**Elections** We have learned an enormous amount in the elections/political processes area. We need to see elections as a holistic process and begin our efforts long before election day. But how do we address the fundamental weaknesses of

many political parties? Given USAID's emphasis on decentralization, should we focus on local elections? In what circumstances is assistance to electoral commissions most effective?

**Civil Society** We all know the importance of a pluralistic, vibrant civil society. The Center is committed to exploring how to construct the most effective strategies to support civil society as a pro-democratic force. This includes identifying ways to strengthen the role of advocacy groups. Additionally, we need to address the issue of financial sustainability: Groups that lack the ability to tap local support tend to disappear when donor support ends. Finally, we are exploring how effective civic education activities are in promoting civic participation and democratic values, and how we can more effectively target such efforts in the future.

**Governance** Formal state actors can either support or undermine democratic development. How can we help maximize the fundamental components of a good governance system? First, with regard to decentralization, we need to ensure that real authority and responsibility are devolved to the local level and that local governance is "democratic" in nature. Second, the continued diversion of public funds for private ends threatens to undermine the legitimacy and integrity of newly democratized systems and restrain progress in those in the process of transition. Finally, building a new relationship between civilian government and the military is critical.

The Center plans to address the issues outlined above. We can not address them alone, however, and we invite all of our partners to help us to make our future democracy programs as effective as possible. We know that democratization is the primary responsibility of those within—not outside—the country. The question remains: How can outside groups committed to supporting democratic reform most effectively assist the process? □

## Egypt

(continued from page 1)

**Independent Labor Unions** The liberalization of a country's economy, noted Costello, is bound to have a significant impact on labor practices which, in turn, would affect a large segment of the population. Under Egypt's old, centrally-planned economy, labor unions were an integral part of the government's overall political apparatus. Decisions were reached in a "comradely" manner at the highest levels of government and state enterprise management. With private sector growth and increased deregulation, Egyptian labor unions need to learn how to sustain themselves as independent organizations and engage in true collective bargaining. USAID/Cairo recognizes the need to help train union leaders who are capable of organizing and managing, who understand group interests and bargaining, and who are capable of interpreting the dynamics of free-market economics.

### **Strengthening Civil Society**

**Organizations** Assisting with the development of a strong civil society is yet another priority of the USAID mission in Egypt. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are taking on increasingly responsible roles in the country's public policy debates. The Egyptian government's concern with national security has made it reluctant to allow unfettered political discourse. As a result, CSOs are free to debate substantive public policy issues, but do not involve themselves in overt political activities. USAID is currently planning to assist with the establishment of a CSO support center. The center would offer a number of services for CSOs, including training in financial management, institutional development, fundraising, and public policy analysis.

**Decentralization** Promising changes also are occurring in the area of decentralization, as local regions in Egypt are being granted greater degrees of autonomy. For the most part, however, funds are still controlled centrally and no autonomous local government structures are in place. USAID is continuing its support of decentralization efforts through the provision of innovative policy reform-based non-project assistance.

Egypt is a secular state, and the challenges it faces are similar to the challenges faced in other parts of the world. Even as accelerated changes in information technology and telecommunications move at a dizzying speed, individuals are concerned with the preservation of traditional values. Even in our own country, where tradition and change often appear to be at odds, we know that some degree of change is inevitable. The real issues are balance and pace.

In Egypt, within this context, there is sufficient room for dialogue and mutual collaboration. As a university professor in Cairo emphasized to Costello during his visit, it is important that the U.S. refrain from preaching the ideals of Western democracy. Rather, it is more useful to ask Egyptians what values they are concerned with preserving, even as their country modernizes its economic and political systems, and to articulate what practical steps—economic and political—might be beneficial to national development. This type of approach will increase our chances of establishing long-term mutual collaboration and understanding in the promotion of democracy as a part of sustainable development. □

*Charles E. Costello is the director of USAID Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance.*

## DG Book Review

### **Democracy is a Discussion: Civic Engagement in Emerging Democracies**

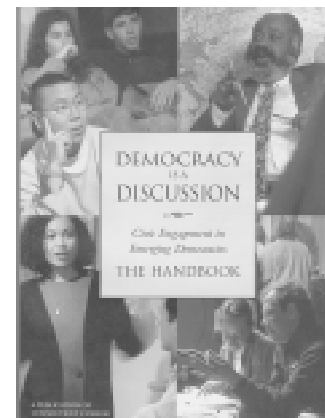
Sondra Myers, editor

Available from Connecticut College  
New London, CT U.S.A.

Tel: (860) 439-2505

66 pages, paperback, \$11.95

"The handbook is an invitation to citizens around the world who seek to create or recreate democracy by engaging in the quintessential democratic act: civic discussion," writes Sondra Myers in the introduction. As such, the handbook is much more than a simple reader. It has been crafted as a tool intended to engage its audience, stimulate thought and conversation, and yield thoughtful reflection on fundamental issues related to democracy and civic life. The handbook is organized along thematic clusters including the rule of law, democracy and the free market, the post-Cold War order, and the press and the public sphere. Each section features an introductory essay, a set of carefully constructed discussion questions, and several readings which approach the theme from diverse perspectives. The list of contributing authors includes Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Vaclav Havel, Rajesh Tandon, Robert Bellah, and Mary Ann Glendon. The handbook is a serious yet very accessible tool, equally useful for work in civic education, group discussions, or individual study. □



# SUNY and CEDEL assist Guatemalan Congress

by Thomas Reilly

**T**he recently signed Guatemalan Peace Accords involve a fundamental change in the way in which national institutions operate. For decades, the Guatemalan government has excluded participation by the Guatemalan people. It is now moving towards full democratic participation. Within this context, USAID is working to strengthen the ability of the Guatemalan National Congress to develop high quality legislative initiatives. Toward this end, the Center for Legislative Development (CEDEL) was created to help design and implement a plan to improve the performance of the Congress in the areas of legislation, representation, and executive oversight. The USAID mission in Guatemala initiated the activity in August 1996 by tapping into an existing funding agreement between USAID's Center for Democracy and Governance and the State University of New York, Office of International Programs.

One critical component of the legislative strengthening activity is a CEDEL-developed legislative internship program. Currently, 30 fourth- and fifth-year law students volunteer a minimum of four hours per day for four months as legislative interns.

Requests for legislative technical assistance are submitted to CEDEL, which assigns an intern (or a team of interns) the task of researching relevant existing legislation and jurisprudence and documenting findings through the compilation of primary source materials. The interns work under the guidance of Guatemalan mentors (legal professionals with extensive technical expertise and legislative experience) in the preparation of executive summaries that recommend for or against the need for new legislation in a particular area. If requested by a member of Congress, CEDEL goes the extra step of hiring a

recognized technical expert to draft a specific legislative initiative under the direction of the legislator. This consultant is assisted by a legislative intern and provided access to the primary source materials collected by the intern during the investigation.

This system has proved to be extremely effective and cost-efficient in responding to legislative priorities and improving the quality of the law. In the six months since the project's inception, CEDEL legislative interns have developed legislative initiatives on such

***"The people who ask us how we are able to volunteer our time, without any salary, should know that there are even more powerful incentives than money."***

***—CEDEL Intern***

critical issues as torture, kidnapping, land expropriation, dual nationality, and the environment, to name a few. The interns also have been directly involved in the drafting of laws necessary for the full implementation of the Peace Accords.

Beyond legislative technical assistance, CEDEL assists the Congress to strengthen administrative and legislative procedures and create an integrated technical and administrative training program for members of Congress and their staffs. CEDEL has presented recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Congress for an administrative restructuring to ensure more effective management and efficiency of operations. Project staff are involved in revising the current Legislative Procedures Manual and

Internal Rules of Order, which govern the introduction and debate of legislative initiatives in the Congress. Also being developed are an Administrative Procedures Manual, a Performance Evaluation Manual, a Secretary's Manual, and a Congressional Directory. Complementary to these efforts, CEDEL is assisting in the professionalization of permanent staff through in-country and international training programs.

In addition to benefiting the legislative process directly, the CEDEL program provides hands-on training to Guatemala's future lawmakers through the legislative internship program. According to Karen Cancinos, a CEDEL intern and law student at Francisco Marroquin University in Guatemala City,

...The people who ask us how we are able to volunteer our time, without any salary, should know that there are even more powerful incentives than money. We contribute time and effort now, and in return we gain experience, skills, relationships, and unimaginable opportunities for our future. But the most important thing is the satisfaction of knowing that we are contributing to the development and progress of Guatemala...

As the program develops, USAID and SUNY/OIP will focus increasing attention on opening the legislative process to more involvement by constituents and public interest groups. In coming years, USAID plans to apply the lessons drawn from this and other legislative strengthening programs as it designs and implements similar activities elsewhere in the world. □

*Thomas Reilly is a project officer in the Office of Democratic Initiatives at USAID/Guatemala-Central American Programs (USAID/G-CAP).*



# USAID Supports Parliamentary Elections in Yemen

On April 27, 1997, the Republic of Yemen held multi-party parliamentary elections, the second since North Yemen and South Yemen united in 1990 and the first since Yemen's 1994 civil war. USAID supported these elections through two of its U.S.-based partner organizations, the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). IFES focused its efforts primarily on pollworker training, and NDI organized a multinational delegation to observe the elections.

## **IFES Pollworker Training Project**

Training for 39,000 pollworkers was among the Yemeni Supreme Elections Commission's (SEC's) most pressing needs for the April elections. In a transitional democracy such as Yemen, a lack of adequate training can lead to procedural errors and confusion at the polling stations, thereby weakening public confidence in the electoral process. Effective training, on the other hand, can ensure that pollworkers—most of them new to elections work—are thoroughly prepared to administer balloting, assist with the vote count, and respond to the myriad issues arising at the polls. Pollworker training also is an opportunity to foster the creation of a contingent of Yemenis experienced in sound election administration and, more broadly, in the rule of law and democratic processes.

IFES used USAID funding to help the SEC implement a "cascade" pollworker training system, through which a core group of trainers trained district-level election officials, who in turn trained the pollworkers. USAID also covered the cost of training manuals and checklists for every polling station. In the 1993 election, no comprehensive pollworker manual was distributed, and SEC officials conducted training for thousands of pollworkers at once at only a few central locations. The IFES

project's objectives were (1) to decentralize the training process, so that pollworkers could attend small training classes closer to their homes, and (2) to provide accurate written information on election procedure to all pollworkers.

The IFES project involved a team of four international and three Yemeni trainers. Elections Canada provided funding for two of the trainers, both Canadian election experts. The IFES-Elections Canada team worked closely with the SEC to prepare all written materials. In early April, the team trained 66 core trainers at a three-day workshop in Sana'a. The core trainers were an impressive group of professors, teachers, and others with previous training experience. The workshop emphasized the details of election procedure and use of participatory teaching techniques, such as role-playing. The core trainers then traveled to the 18 governorates of Yemen, where they trained 1,200 district-level election officials. Those officials trained the pollworkers themselves, using the IFES manual and interactive classes. In recognition of Yemeni social custom, separate sessions were held for male and female pollworkers.

## **Results of Yemen's Elections/ NDI Multinational Observer Group**

The General People's Congress (President Ali Abdullah Salih's party) won 187 of a total 301 parliamentary seats, with 54 going to independents, 53 to the Islamist Yemeni Congregation for Reform Party, and the remainder divided among smaller parties.

Photo: Ronald Wolfe



*Women's Committee distributes voting cards in Sana'a*

The NDI observer delegation concluded that, despite certain constraints including the boycott by the Yemeni Socialist Party and the escalation of North-South tensions, the elections generally represented a positive step in Yemen's democratic development. In particular, the NDI delegation noted a relatively high voter turnout rate (especially impressive given the long distances traveled by many voters to cast their ballots); high levels of commitment on the part of electoral officials, party agents, and more than 15,000 domestic observers; a generally peaceful voting process; increased participation of women both as voters and as elections workers; and a strong desire on the part of the Yemeni people to adhere to international electoral standards.

USAID-supported pollworker training and election observation conducted by IFES and NDI represented important components of a well-coordinated donor effort that contributed to Yemen's peaceful election. Additionally, the work of IFES and NDI have contributed to the development of practices upon which the Yemeni people can draw for future elections. □

*The editor would like to thank Amy Hawthorne of IFES for her contribution to this article.*

## Guide to Useful Democracy/Governance Internet Sites

The Internet is an increasingly critical tool for individuals, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies involved in the promotion of democracy and governance (DG). The following is a summary of several useful websites that provide up-to-date DG information. Many of these sites were excerpted from *Democracy and Governance on the World Wide Web: Selected Internet Sites with Special Reference to Africa*, published by USAID's Africa Bureau Information Center. For a copy of this publication, please contact Dana Ott at dott@usaid.gov (e-mail) or 703/312-7199 (fax).



### Rule of Law

#### *The U.S. House of Representatives Internet Law Library*

Full text of international treaties and international laws.

<http://law.house.gov/89.htm>

#### *American Bar Association Home Page*

Links to news, ABA databases, and other law-related resources.

<http://www.abanet.org/>

#### *World Wide Constitutions*

Texts of constitutions from selected countries.

<gopher://www.eur.nl:80/hGET%20/iacl/const.html>

#### *Human Rights Web*

International human rights documents and links to organizations.

<http://www.hrweb.org/>



### Civil Society

#### *Center for Civil Society International*

Links to publications, bulletin boards and civil society organizations worldwide.

<http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/~ccsi/ccsihome.html>

#### *CIVICUS*

An international alliance dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.

<http://www.civicus.org/>

#### *Center for Living Democracy*

The Center works to encourage dialogue, support citizen innovators, and disseminate relevant news and information.

<http://www.sover.net/~cld/>



### Elections and Political Processes

#### *Election Notes*

News updates on elections around the world.

<http://www.klipsan.com/elecnews.htm>

#### *Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Around the World*

Electoral calendar and election results listed by country.

<http://www.universal.nl/users/derksen/election/home.htm>

#### *International Foundation for Election Systems*

Nonprofit organization specializing in technical assistance for elections and electoral processes.

<http://www.ifes.org/>

#### *Parties on the Net*

List of political party websites, by country.

<http://www.universal.nl/users/derksen/parties.htm>



### Governance

#### *The Institute on Governance Home Page*

Links to regional networks, upcoming conferences, and program information.

<http://igvn.ca/>

#### *Transparency International*

Information related to anti-corruption activities worldwide.

<http://www.transparency.de/>

#### *Parliaments of the World*

Links to 35 parliamentary websites throughout world.

<http://www.gdn.org/parliaments/index.html>

#### *Parliamentary Procedure Resources*

Parliamentary procedure guides and information.

<http://www.parli.com/>



### General D/G Sites

#### *Foreign Government Resources on the Web*

(University of Michigan)

Links to international organizations, policy documents, and foreign government websites.

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/foreign.html>

#### *Freedom House*

Program information, U.S. policy information, and human rights reports.

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/>

#### *Journal of Democracy*

On-line access to the *Journal of Democracy*.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_democracy](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy)

#### *National Endowment for Democracy*

Links to resource centers, program information, and publications.

<http://www.ned.org/>

#### *National Democratic Institute*

Links to DG-related sites and calendar of events.

<http://ndi.org/>

#### *International Republican Institute*

Training materials, newsletters, and links to DG-related sites.

<http://iri.org/>

## IPC in Uganda

(continued from page 1)

ensure more effective implementation of policies and initiatives enjoying broad national support. During the course of their discussions, these reform-minded public servants and private sector leaders envisioned a means to stimulate private sector growth by bringing together business leaders and government officials.

The stakeholders planned a National Forum as a locus for broad reform, with a view toward developing strategies designed to engage the private and public sectors in furthering economic development. USAID/Kampala agreed to contribute funding to the initiative and IPC provided facilitation and technical support.

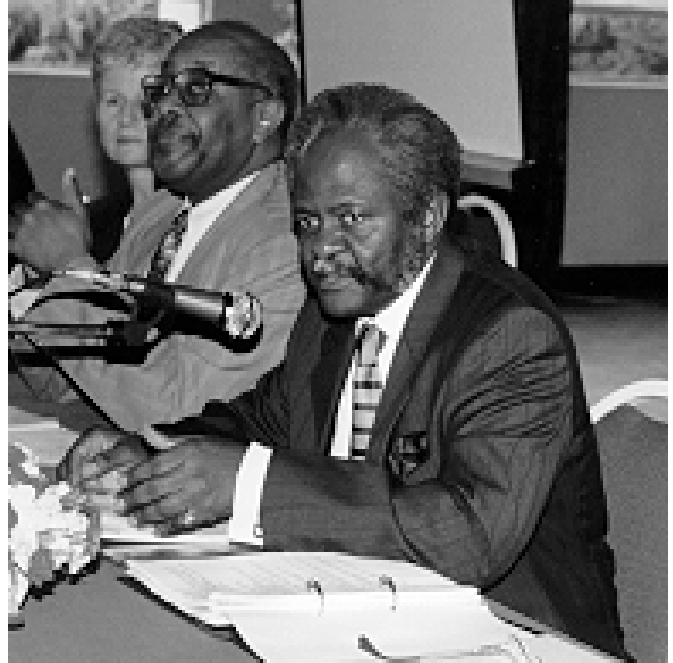
The first National Forum workshop, held in October 1992, focused on strategic management for investment promotion and export growth. The workshop's objective was to develop a common will (1) to remove obstacles to private sector growth and (2) to more effectively implement previously-initiated policy reforms. Ugandan President H.E. Museveni, his vice-president, and several senior ministers personally attended the first National Forum workshop to show their support. Among invited participants were private and public sector representatives considered "catalytic" in promoting private sector growth, individuals with direct responsibility for policy implementation, and individuals with specialized knowledge related to the workshop's focus.

A second National Forum workshop was held in November 1994 and focused on sustaining the cooperation between government and the private sector. Task forces previously formed according to issue area (investment promotion, export growth, financial sector development, and tax policy) prepared summaries of progress made on mandated action plans, highlighted successes and failures, and emphasized new policy areas for priority attention. Selected issues were then debated and

presented to the plenary for further discussion and consensus-building. Workshop participants developed new action plans, which were presented to President Museveni.

With only very occasional, short-term technical support from the IPC Project, the Forum task groups have continued to meet in subsequent years and to hold annual National Forum workshops. These workshops are seen as highly successful in reducing mistrust between the public and private sectors. They bring together individuals who would not otherwise have reason to meet. Through sometimes heated but typically productive discussions, forum participants often reach consensus on issues related to private sector activity and the relative significance of identified legal or economic constraints. Actions are often assigned to specific task force members, thereby contributing to the rapid resolution of identified issues.

Occasionally, complex or controversial questions are taken up with government officials at the ministerial level. At other times, outside consultants contribute to the arbitration and decision-making process. In the area of tax policy, for instance, an IPC consultant, working with a temporarily polarized task force, concentrated on assisting task force members to master some econometric instruments, thereby enabling them to reach a mutually agreeable conclusion. In the financial sector, forum recommendations have led to the liberalization of interest rates, reduction of bank reserve requirements, and payment of interest on commercial bank deposits with the Central Bank.



*Honorary Niyanja Nkangi, Ugandan Minister of Finance, addressing the 1996 National Forum.*

Ugandan observers have noted that the success of the National Forum is indicative of the importance of the dialogue between government and the private sector. Donors have noted the validity of a technical support approach which enables committed and able leaders of the country to strengthen their own leadership of a strategic, democratic process for accomplishing national priorities. USAID's hope is that the policy dialogue encouraged through the IPC project will facilitate the building of institutions, legal frameworks, and infrastructure, which in turn will stimulate increased private sector growth in Uganda and elsewhere around the globe. □

*Dr. William Kalema is director of Uganda Manufacturers Association Consulting and Information Services. He has been closely involved in Uganda's National Forum process since its inception in the early 1990s.*

*For additional information about the IPC project, please contact Pat Isman of USAID's Center for Democracy and Governance at [pisman@usaid.gov](mailto:pisman@usaid.gov) (e-mail) or 202/736-7892 (fax).*

## G/DG Trains USAID Democracy Field Staff in Asia/Near East

by Erin Soto

**T**he Center for Democracy and Governance (G/DG) is the "home base" for USAID's democracy officers, scattered among various field missions throughout the globe. An important component of this role is the provision of training opportunities for democracy field staff. In March 1997, the Center conducted a training workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, for USAID DG officers working in Asia and the Near East (ANE).

This represented the first in a series of four Center-sponsored regional training workshops for USAID field staff.

The five-day Dhaka workshop was attended by 25 democracy officers representing nearly all of the USAID missions in the ANE region: Bangladesh, Cambodia,

Egypt, Indonesia, the Philippines, and West Bank-Gaza.

G/DG democracy officers Gary Hansen, Chris Sabatini, and Erin Soto served as trainers. The workshop also received support from USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) and the Center for Women in Development (G/WID).



*Dhaka workshop participants and trainers*

The majority of the topics covered during the workshop were proposed by the trainees themselves. These topics included: democracy assessments and strategies; programmatic tactics in civil society, democratic local governance, and human rights; and performance measurement and indicators. □

*A similar DG workshop will be held in Zagreb in September 1997. In 1998, the Center plans to offer workshops in Latin America and Africa.*



*Participants discussing information shared at Dhaka workshop*



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### CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

*"... promoting the transition to and consolidation of democratic regimes throughout the world."*